

GCU

AUGUST 2018

MAGAZINE



Dawn of a New Era

Rise continues
with transition
back to nonprofit



FEEL THE THUNDER IN THE HEART OF PHOENIX



GCU Magazine is a quarterly publication of the Office of Communications and Public Relations at Grand Canyon University.

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Nicole Powell loves basketball and being able to coach it at GCU, but she's equally grateful that her younger days were filled with a variety of sports and other activities.

PHOTO BY DAVID
KADLUBOWSKI



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When it comes to west Phoenix and GCU's effect on it, Phoenix City Councilman Daniel Valenzuela knows what he's talking about – he grew up here.

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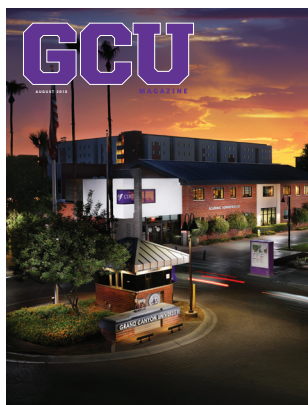
GCU's transition back to nonprofit status means access to research grants and other opportunities. But the campus remains grounded in a student-first culture.

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Diversity is about much more than just ethnicity at GCU. Here, it revolves around the University's consistent devotion to its Christian worldview and mission.

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The GCU Insider is back with more tips on what to look for this year. A new app will be handy, but students no doubt can't wait to get their mitts on ... tacos!



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ON THE COVER: The main entrance to campus is about to be bathed in sunlight – just as it's a new day for GCU with its transition back to nonprofit status. PHOTO BY DAVID KADLUBOWSKI



August

20-25

WELCOME WEEK

Ah, those waning days of summer. At GCU, they mean one thing: It's time to get back to Lopes Country. Hundreds of student volunteers descend on campus, purple pride in tow, to help new arrivals move into their residences in record time.

24-26,
31-Sept. 2

'RING ROUND THE MOON'

Cold-hearted Hugo wants to stop his innocent twin brother Frederic's wedding to an heiress who has fallen for Hugo. His plan: Elicit the help of a ballerina to seduce Frederic. The comedy opens Ethington Theatre's 2018-19 season. 602-639-8800.

24

MEN'S SOCCER KICKS OFF

Welcome Week will seem even more welcoming as the men's soccer team takes on Wisconsin in its opening match of the season. 7 p.m., GCU Stadium.

gculopes.com

September

10

'CANYON WORSHIP' RELEASE

The best songs from the University's Center for Worship Arts students are compiled on their annual album.



26

AIR 1 POSITIVE HITS TOUR

Grammy winner Zach Williams, We Are Messengers, Joshua Micah, Aaron Cole and Branan Murphy are featured. 7 p.m., GCU Arena. gcuarena.com

October



12-14

FAMILY WEEKEND

The three-day celebration includes everything from a soccer game to family hikes, the Lope Shop Thunder Bolt, a special Chapel service and live entertainment. It's a great opportunity for families to tour the campus and see what it's like for students.

12-14, 19-21

'MACBETH'

"Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." It is a tale, furthermore, told by Shakespeare and will hit the Ethington Theatre stage. 602-639-8800.

13

PRISCILLA SHIRER

Her father, Tony Evans, is Senior Pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church in Dallas, but Shirer is a force in her own right. The author and Christian evangelist has focused recently on teaching the Bible to women. 9:30 a.m., GCU Arena. gcuarena.com.

19-20

FALL COMMENCEMENT

The campus tips its hat to nontraditional students, who will don their caps and gowns for the culmination of their hard-won degrees in five ceremonies at GCU Arena.



5 QUESTIONS WITH

Dr. Sherman Elliott

Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Appropriately, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences is led by a Renaissance man: a traveler, historian, reader, musician and avid theatre-goer. Leading the college with the most students and professors is time-consuming, yet Elliott continues to branch out in ways that serve the community and ultimately students, some of whom may eventually attend GCU. Since 2016, he has served on the Arizona Humanities Council, a position appointed by Governor Doug Ducey. Moreover, he was an appointee of former Mayor Greg Stanton to the Phoenix Sister Cities Commission, both as a member and on the executive board.

1 What is the mission of the Phoenix Sister Cities Commission?

We promote economic, cultural and educational exchanges with members of those cities. So we host events here to encourage trade, to encourage cultural exchanges and to bring in students and vice versa. We send delegations from Phoenix to the 10 sister cities — Calgary, Alberta, Canada; Catania, Italy; Chengdu, China; Ennis, Ireland; Grenoble, France; Hermosillo, Mexico; Himeji, Japan; Prague, Czech Republic; Ramat Gan, Israel and Taipei, Taiwan — for the same purpose.

2 Speaking of travel, where do you and your family (wife Lisa, daughter Jane and son Ethan) love to go?

We love Britain, so we have been three years in a row. In our most recent trip, last year, we went to southern England for an archeological dig of a Roman villa. We like the rural areas; we like to go to places in Britain where there are very few Americans. My daughter likes to tell me that we go to places where normal people don't go. She's a GCU student, so I allow her to say that.

3 As a student at a Jesuit school, the University of San Francisco, and a teacher for seven years at a Jesuit school, Brophy College Preparatory, how is your Ignatian identity evident in your role as dean?

It is evident every day. Ignatian spirituality is about asking one question: What more can one do for God? It is magis (Latin



for “more”), and magis does not mean quantity “more,” it means quality “more.” Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order, changed the world among Catholics back in the 16th century because he said we had to get out of monasteries and we had to embrace the world. People trained in Ignatian spirituality are trained to bring the values of the Gospel into daily life in their professions, whether they are professors, journalists, engineers, etc. Whatever they are doing, they bring the presence of the Gospels into daily life. So as the dean, obviously, I do that in the way we design our programs and work with our learners and the way I hire faculty and the way we train faculty. It is part of who I am.

4 You're an avid reader. What are you diving into these days?

I am just finishing “Hero Empire” (“Hero of the Empire: The Boer War, a Daring Escape, and the Making of Winston Churchill,” by Candice Millard). It is all about how Winston Churchill became a leader in England. Also, I am a news junkie. I read The New York Times, L.A. Times, etc.

5 What is a little-known aspect of your persona?

I love Shakespeare. I have attended the Utah Shakespeare Festival every year for the past 22 years. The past few years, my wife and I have brought our children.

— Theresa Smith

Mission: Possible

Councilman has strong feelings about GCU...
because he shares its strong feelings about west Phoenix

BY DANIEL VALENZUELA

EDITOR'S NOTE: My LopeLife is a GCU Magazine feature in which students and staff share enlightening experiences about life at GCU. In this issue, we are featuring a special guest who is closely aligned with the University. To be considered for a future My LopeLife, please submit a short synopsis of your topic to GCUToday@gcu.edu with "My LopeLife" in the subject field.

Phoenix City Councilman Daniel Valenzuela speaks at the press conference to announce the University's transition back to nonprofit status.

PHOTO BY DAVID KADLUBOWSKI



I grew up in this community. In a family of six raised for the most part by a single mom, it wasn't easy. We moved around – a lot. The Alhambra neighborhood for a few months. The Garfield neighborhood for about a year. And when times were real tough, at my grandmother's in the Duppa Villa public housing project.

That meant attending a different school just about every year — in fact, 13 schools in all.

But, through all of those challenges, we got by. What made the difference was the help we got along the way — the people who went out of their way to make an impact on someone else's life.

I think that's what draws me to Grand Canyon University. There are a lot of parallels, from the University's modest beginnings, to the times of near-bankruptcy and now as a vibrant and forward-thinking institution. But, mostly, what sets this university apart is its desire to make a difference in people's lives.

As a member of the Glendale (Ariz.) Fire Department for the past 16 years, a Phoenix City Councilman who represents this district and a candidate to become the next mayor of Phoenix, I had the privilege of speaking at GCU's announcement in July about becoming a nonprofit university again.

When I think about GCU's history, I think back to 2008. Remember what it was like for all of us? We were in a horrible recession and

had to dig our way out of it. Crime rates were up. In the fifth-largest city in the country, the hot spot for crime wasn't south Phoenix or Maryvale, it was Alhambra – this area. While we don't want crime anywhere in the city, there was too much of it right here.

But GCU, like the people who live in this community, never gave up. It problem-solved. It figured it out, even if it meant changing its business model. There was a mission, and this university is mission driven. It was going to follow through on that mission.

In doing so, it has enabled thousands of students to graduate from GCU – thousands of students who have literally put their fingerprints on this community. They have painted walls to get rid of the blight and helped repair and refurbish hundreds of homes on Habitat for Humanity projects.

GCU also has invested in the community through its Learning Lounge and Students Inspiring Students initiatives. Children who otherwise never would have thought about setting foot on a university campus now have the opportunity to come here for academic help or even to be a student with a full-tuition scholarship. You bring them in, you help them out and it drives something in those students. We've seen it.

But the most important thing that GCU has done goes beyond even that. In what used to be a hot spot for crime in the 4-mile radius around the University, crime rates are down significantly thanks to GCU's partnership with Phoenix Police. Home values in the 85017 zip code, meanwhile, have risen 65 percent in the last three years since GCU started its partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

This university is an asset to the country, to the state and most certainly to the City of Phoenix. It's pretty amazing.

What GCU is doing is being felt everywhere.

I recently was at a gathering in Los Angeles, sharing the story of Phoenix. I'm passionate about this city, my hometown. As I talked about Phoenix, I started talking about the GCU story and how much has changed – for both the University and the surrounding

“GCU, like the people who live in this community, never gave up. It problem-solved. It figured it out, even if it meant changing its business model. There was a mission, and this university is mission driven. It was going to follow through on that mission.”

community. But some things never change. I'm talking about the good things — about what drives people, the never-give-up attitude, the integrity, the humility and the work ethic. What did change – what had to change – were the things that prevented or limited opportunities.

Afterward, three GCU graduates walked over and thanked me for sharing that story. They're so excited about what their alma mater is doing, as am I.

The people who run this university, who work at this university, who attend this university, who support this university and who graduated from this university understand something very important: Even more important than investing in buildings and infrastructure, which is incredibly important, you're investing in people.

As one Phoenician who is from this community, I'm grateful. I am a partner and a big supporter.

How could you not be? **G**

ABOUT DANIEL VALENZUELA

Daniel Valenzuela was elected as the District 5 representative on the Phoenix City Council in 2012, was re-elected in 2015 and is now running for mayor. He has been a firefighter for 16 years, and as his bio states, “Other than being a husband and father, nothing – including being an elected official – has given him MORE satisfaction than being a firefighter.”





Change in tax status will
grant new opportunities
but same campus culture

Students will profit

RICK VACEK, THERESA SMITH, LANA SWEETEN-SHULTS
AND RYAN KRYSKA CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT

The announcement of Grand Canyon University's transition back to nonprofit status manifested into a celebration of GCU's accomplishments the last 10 years ... of how it got to this point and where it's going ... of the transformation of its campus and its west Phoenix neighborhood.

But, most significantly, it was a celebration of what GCU has been able to do and will continue to do for students – students like Nate Carpenter and Noah Wolfe.

The two student leaders were insightful, eloquent and passionate as they spoke to the standing-room-only gathering on the fourth floor of the Student Union. Carpenter, the 2017-18 Associated Students of Grand Canyon University (ASGCU) president and now a University employee, and Wolfe, the new student body president, told the audience how their GCU experiences have helped mold them into curious learners, caring people and charismatic leaders.

Wolfe summed it up well when he said in his speech, "Regardless of our (nonprofit) status, the students are excited because students come first here. This university has proved that time and time again. ... I know our student body is excited to pursue finding our purpose as we continue to pioneer the world of private education."

Brian Mueller, who will continue as President of GCU and CEO and

Nate Carpenter (left), the 2017-18 Associated Students of GCU president, and his successor, Noah Wolfe, both talk passionately about what they and other students have experienced at the University.

PHOTO BY DAVID KADLUBOWSKI

“We operated very much like a not-for-profit institution for 10 years. . . . Number one, we didn’t raise tuition when we could have done it very easily. . . . Secondly, almost every single dollar of profit made got reinvested into educational infrastructure.”

—BRIAN MUELLER, GCU PRESIDENT



VIDEO ON NEWS.GCU.EDU

The press conference to announce GCU's transition back to nonprofit status

Chairman of the Board for Grand Canyon Education, Inc. (GCE), listed the reasons for the transaction, through which GCE sold GCU for approximately \$875 million to a nonprofit entity that will retain the GCU name:

- It puts GCU on a level playing field with other traditional universities with regard to tax status.
- It ensures that GCU students and faculty have the same access to research opportunities and grants as other universities.
- It opens up the world of philanthropic giving to GCU.
- It allows GCU to be a voting member of the NCAA.
- Most importantly, it better enables GCU to continue to freeze tuition, which it has maintained for 10 straight years on the ground campus.

Afterward, Mueller lauded the work of Dan Bachus, Chief Financial Officer, and Brian Roberts, Chief Administrative Officer and General Counsel, and their teams for pulling together a complicated challenge. “This has not been done very many times before and never done exactly like this,” Mueller said.

He added, “We feel good about how we did this, and the for-profit

model and public investment, we think, should be rethought. There should be a way to make educational opportunities even greater in this country than they are today and not be so heavily reliant on tax dollars.”

Approximately 35 percent, or 1,400, of full-time employees under the previous GCE flag transferred their employment to GCU along with almost all of GCE’s 6,000 part-time and adjunct employees and student workers. That leaves approximately 2,600 full-time employees working for GCE, which continues to be publicly traded and will be able to outsource its educational services, advanced technologies and expertise to other universities and even Christian high schools.

One thing that will not change: the GCU campus culture.

“Our student body, in and of itself, the core of who we are, is not changing,” Carpenter promised the audience.

Another kind of transition

Carpenter was one of only seven students in his graduating class at Trinity Lutheran School in Bend, Ore. He was incredibly successful there – student body president, National Honor Society president and captain of the basketball team – but he did not know a soul when he arrived at GCU.



This is by far the largest economic-development success story that Arizona has ever seen, based on the number of jobs that have been created, the amount of capital invested in the economy and the thriving student graduates that are a part of our community.”

—SARA DIAL, FORMER ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE DIRECTOR
AND LEAD INDEPENDENT DIRECTOR OF GCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

“From Day 1, I just wanted to meet as many people as I could because that’s the best way to hear people’s story and know what their heart is,” Carpenter said.

As a Resident Assistant (R.A.) his sophomore and junior years, his passion for his fellow Lopes grew, leading to his election as ASGCU president. In that role, he emphasized diversity and the expansion of clubs and organizations.

“Students can take what they are passionate about and create something with it and make it flourish (here),” Carpenter said. “That is so unique; it doesn’t take long processes and years to build to get something done. It can take a couple weeks. It might be stressful at times, but it is amazing when it comes to creating opportunities for our students.”

Upon his graduation in April with a degree in business management, Carpenter was hired as a university counselor. He plans to begin a dual master’s program at GCU in January, for Business Administration and Science of Leadership, followed by law school.

Carpenter is a keen-minded mentor to Wolfe, who aspires to be a minister, politician or community developer and relates well to GCU and its volunteer partnerships with west Phoenix, a neighborhood similar to his birthplace in Virginia.

“I was born into an impoverished community, a lot of what this (west Phoenix) community looked like a while ago, and that impacted me,” said Wolfe, who was adopted by two government employees (CIA and NASA) who moved the family to San Diego. Upon graduation from Foothills Christian High School, his life journey continued at GCU.

“I think it was crazy for me coming to a new city, coming to a new college, and wondering what it’s going to look like,” he said. “I know there was some time in the early stages of my freshman year where I really asked the question, ‘Is this the place for me?’

“I have phenomenal people in my life, and my parents and my mentors just encouraged me to keep sticking it out, to invest in myself. When I decided to go all in on the opportunities here, that’s when things really turned around.

“This university loving and investing in me really pushed me to turn around and invest in other people. There was a commitment from President Mueller all the way down to invest in students.”

As an R.A., a Discover GCU student worker, a member of the



We have students attending our Christian university from all over the world, representing almost every culture that you can imagine. Yes, we are a very diverse university, providing full inclusion for all students preparing them to serve their communities, all in the glory of God and our savior Jesus Christ. That's the real wow factor."

—DR. JIM RICE, MEMBER, GCU BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Diversity Council, a community volunteer and now as ASGCU president, Wolfe utilizes his tender heart, galvanizing charm and exemplary speaking skills to lead the Lopes.

"All of those experiences helped me to see first-hand how really special this university is," Wolfe said.

Research will be under microscope

Researcher Dr. Mike Mobley — his expertise is in spectroscopy and optics — has no problem cranking up the volume when it comes to providing the kinds of life experiences Wolfe referenced.

So it seems apt that Mobley, Executive Director of GCU's Center for Integrated Science, Engineering and Technology, would be the University's champion in spearheading its efforts to establish an office to develop grants — research grants included — as well as endowments, donations, philanthropic giving, scholarships and the like as GCU enters a new era as a nonprofit.

The office will administer new sources of income for the University, which didn't qualify for most grants and similar types of giving in the past because of its for-profit status.

"The issue has been that there are a lot of foundations that support educational initiatives, community service initiatives, health care initiatives, and we've been excluded from those opportunities in the past," Mobley said. "So that's one major area.

The other is in the area of federal grants. A significant portion of those grants are earmarked for nonprofits. So now (as a nonprofit), we've become eligible for those."

The new development office is still being established and the University is close to naming a vice president to oversee it, but Mobley has been quietly and busily working in the background. He has been meeting with the University's deans to define their strategies and how to leverage the new grant and philanthropic opportunities. He also has been tasked with devising a budget.

His focus, he said, will be on research initiatives — ones that will bring in more equipment to the University, for example, and more research opportunities for students.

GCU touts two major research initiatives, the first of which is the Center for Innovation in Research and Teaching. It focuses on the scholarship of improved teaching and learning outcomes and the presentation and publication of those best practices at academic conferences and scholarly journals throughout the country.

The other program, established just two years ago, is the Research and Design Program. About two dozen projects fall under the RDP umbrella, and about 40 faculty and staff and almost 290 students were engaged in one or more research initiatives in 2017-18. Those projects have been supported by the budget of the College of Science, Engineering and Technology (CSET) but now may find support in these other funding sources.

The projects have included:

- Investigating Sonoran desert plants to learn if they tout medicinal properties;
- Researching cyanobacteria to find out if they could be the answer to the world's dirty fuel problems;



While the transition to nonprofit status will open new opportunities for research grants, GCU will remain primarily a teaching institution.

- Creating an anatomical atlas;
- Developing a bandage to help in wound care;
- Measuring whether daily exercise is better than alternating exercise when it comes to lowering blood pressure.

Mobley emphasized that even with these new opportunities for research grants, GCU remains first and foremost, as it has been since it was founded in 1949, a teaching institution. “But we want to supplement that with significant research initiatives,” he said.

So, rather than immediate sweeping changes, expect to see a steady ramp-up in the University’s existing research programs.

“We’ve been on a great ramp-up. This (grant opportunities and the like) will just continue to improve that,” he said. “As we get to be a bigger and bigger university, as you go from 10,000 to 20,000 to 30,000 students, it’s very difficult to think about involving a whole lot of students in research and innovative activities unless you’ve got some sources of funding externally.”

Other opportunities

Outside of research grants for the sciences, Mobley said GCU is looking forward to grant opportunities elsewhere. He noted that many foundations’ charters limit their support to nonprofits, which means GCU’s new status could pave the way for help with community initiatives in the Murphy and Alhambra school districts.

Carpenter also is encouraged by the chance to be able to help the community more with such financial support. He is heartened, he said, by “those opportunities to be able to apply for grants, to be able to make an impact moving forward in the Murphy district, moving

forward even further with the Alhambra district, to be able to better those communities, to be able to better the community that surrounds us and give opportunities.”

Jon Valla, a CSET assistant dean, sees chances for GCU to land student training and experience grants, which provide students with the experiences they need to be accepted into graduate or medical school.

He also is excited about what the nonprofit transition means in terms of philanthropy.

“We will now be able to accept philanthropic gifts from alumni, parents, relatives and friends of the University,” Valla said. “Providing for equipment and other items that will significantly and directly enhance the experiences and training of future students is often a very attractive target for donors.”

Mobley said all these initiatives, research and otherwise, are again focused on the most important thing to the University: its students.

“The heavy focus, unlike a traditional research university, is opportunities for our students,” he said. “That’s the thing that comes first as a teaching university.”

As it always has been and will continue to be, Mueller emphasized. When he arrived at GCU in 2008, the University still was recovering from the shock of facing bankruptcy and nearly closing its doors four years earlier. Asked about his level of excitement then compared to today, he replied:

“It was a combination of excited and scared because there were a lot of challenges. Whether we were going to make it out of the tough times was not absolutely clear. We’re just as excited as we were 10 years ago, but we’re much more confident and sure that this model has staying power.”

And its impetus comes from celebrating students. **G**

Why
DIVERS
matters



ITY

It's the organic result of GCU's
Christian worldview, and it extends
through every part of campus
– and out into the neighborhood.

BY RICK VACEK • PHOTOS BY DAVID KADLUBOWSKI



he mission statement of Grand Canyon University's Diversity Council declares that it is "composed of faculty and staff working in a collaborative effort, together with students, to promote and enhance the University's efforts to maintain a diverse and unified campus community *in alignment with the University's Christian mission and vision.*"

Note those last nine words. That's the key. GCU's approach to diversity starts there.

"Spirituality is the lens through which we view and accomplish the work of diversity – 'Loving your neighbors as yourself,' Mark 12:31," said Dr. Antoinette Farmer-Thompson, the Diversity Council chair. "Yes, diversity means dialogue. But for us it also means, 'How do you really help the people around you, how do you have real impact – not just for today, but for generations?"

"High quality, affordable education is one of the best ways – if not the best – of bridging equity gaps. That's the foundational piece for our diversity efforts and, ultimately, truly being united in purpose, by purpose and on purpose."

The Council, formed in 2015, has fostered an environment of open dialogue and thoughtful discussion with numerous opportunities for students to join in. And this year, more than ever, a traditional campus where 47 percent of the student population is diverse is focused on continuing the conversation with all students, new and returning, of every ethnicity, age, religion and socio-economic background.

The goal is to make them all feel included – everyone, without exception. Right from the start of Welcome Week, students will hear about the Diversity Office, opened last spring (it's Room 150 in the Student Life Building).

They will hear that diversity outreach always has been and always will be a priority, in light of GCU's Christian worldview.

They will hear that diversity at GCU extends beyond the campus gates and right out into the neighborhood, where students regularly volunteer their time and energy. In fact, many students from the University's multicultural neighborhood are on campus because of the University's efforts to make a college education affordable for everyone.

They will hear about the clubs devoted to diversity.

They will hear why diversity is so important to the Associated Students of Grand Canyon University (ASGCU) and the Student Engagement team.

There will be socials devoted to international

students and those from diverse backgrounds, including a cultural celebration that is a collaboration of the Black Student Union, Latino Student Union, Hui Aloha (formerly the Hawaiian Club) and Filipino-American Student Association.

Very intentional. But what's interesting is how this all came together. Diversity affects students even before they set foot on campus, and it has happened organically.



Dr. Antoinette Farmer-Thompson

The Havocs, GCU's nationally renowned cheering section, brings together students from a variety of backgrounds.

GCU PHOTO ARCHIVE



"For in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."
 – Colossians 1:16-17

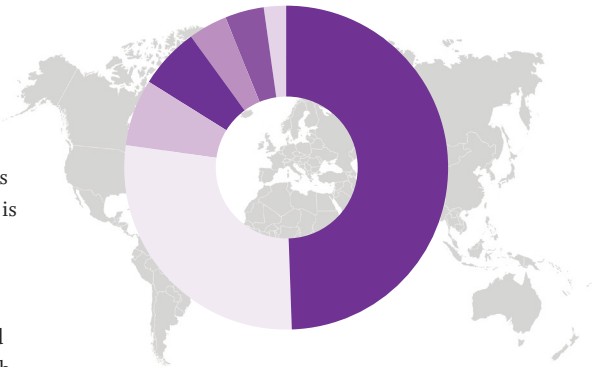
No one is more passionate about the importance of diversity than GCU President Brian Mueller.

"It has always started with President Mueller," Farmer-Thompson said. "I think it was always his destiny to be here. He loves God. It's part of who he is, and as a Christian man, he lives out a Christian mission. Everything he does is with the good of people in mind. Therefore, diversity to him is not something that you think about and check off

and have a strategic plan. The man has done it, just based on who he is from a spiritual perspective. It's his heart for people."

One of the reasons behind the University's 10-year freeze on traditional campus tuition is Mueller's fervent belief that America doesn't promise equality, it promises equality of opportunity. He says students and families from all socio-economic backgrounds should have access to college and, in turn, a good job.

"What I'm most proud of in what we've done here is that we've set out to make private Christian higher education affordable to all socio-economic classes of Americans," he said. "The reality is, education is getting unaffordable and therefore inaccessible to large segments of the population. Even state universities are becoming out of the reach for many people, but certainly private schools are



GCU UNDERGRADUATE ETHNICITY
 TRADITIONAL CAMPUS
 (FALL 2017)

White	50%
Hispanic	28%
Black or African American	7%
Two or more	6%
Asian	4%
Unreported	4%
Other	2%

way out of reach for most Americans."

The tuition freeze has made GCU the exception and has resulted in a student population that is 28 percent Latino and seven percent African-American – both over-represented in the lower socio-economic strata.

"It's not that we came up with slick marketing plans to attract Hispanic and African-American students here; we just came up with a financial model that made it affordable," he said.

"I think the thing that's most important about this is that it combines the free market system with the Christian worldview. You put those two things together and you create an institution that's based on Conscious Capitalism principles, and then diversity happens. It's organic, which means it's probably going to survive well into the future."

• • • •

"Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all!"

– Romans 12:16

The tuition freeze is only part of GCU's commitment to diversity.

It also serves its predominantly Hispanic inner-city community with the Learning Lounge, which provides free academic assistance for K-12 students. That led to the Students Inspiring Students initiative, which already has awarded 300 full-tuition scholarships to neighborhood students. Of



they have an area of concern, a comment or a thought or just need a place to hang out and have a conversation,” Mack said. “It provides a physical space and a phone number. It connects students with the resources that already exist or creates resources that need to exist.”

Numerous programs already existed.

“We had a history. There was this component to the student experience that addressed and celebrated and affirmed the minority groups across the campus. From my vantage point, it was a wonderful thing to see unfold,” said Dr. Tim Griffin, Pastor and Dean of Students.

“But it’s OK to think through and take a step back and say, ‘Can we add some components to make this better?’ I think that theme has been played out in the development of the Diversity Office.”

One of the activities organized by the Diversity Office last spring was a speaker series with top-level, career-oriented topics, such as “Turning Your Vision into a Business,” “Pathways to Medical School” and “Pathways to Law School.” Diverse members from the Phoenix area were brought in to share their stories and give students a glimpse of what that option might look like.

ASGCU staged Human Library, where a wide variety of students shared details of their backgrounds and broke down the walls of stereotypes, and Diversity Speaks, a series of talks about important topics related to the subject. There was a full week of diversity activities, with each day devoted to a different ethnic group, as well as a one-day Cultural Fest that featured various types of dance.



Ruth Nsubaga

“After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.” – Revelation 7:9

But perhaps there is no better example of how diversity plays out on campus than the African Student Association, which meets every other week. When it was formed two years ago, advisor Ruth Nsubaga stressed to the students that she wanted it to be more than a social club – she wanted them to gain new knowledge, learn new skills. They eagerly agreed.

For the first semester, that means bringing in outside speakers. The students become the speakers in the spring semester, sharing about their cultures.

“The cool thing about our club is that it’s not generally just African students – they can bring their friends,” she said. “All these different people are learning about all these different cultures. They’ve learned a lot of basic concepts about how to engage with each other and how to engage in conversation because there will be disagreements.”

And when they don’t see eye-to-eye, Nsubaga reins them in by reminding them of their Christian worldview and by practicing the Stephen Covey principles she espouses. “I need everyone to live out biblical principles and then the ‘Seven Habits of Highly Effective People’ and I think we’ll be fine,” she tells them.

None of this would be possible without a student population that is on board with the importance of listening.

“Our students have embraced the diversity,” Mueller said. “We have all socio-economic classes represented and so many different

racial and ethnic groups are represented, and yet when people walk through our campus, the most frequent comment we get from families is the students are kind, they’re considerate, they’re respectful, people seem happy here, we want our son or daughter involved in this kind of environment.

“Not only is it diverse; diversity has happened organically, which means it’s sustainable but is producing a very healthy culture.”

Students will get a taste of that culture right from the start of Welcome Week. ASGCU President Noah Wolfe is determined to see to that.

“We want people to know that the minute they drive onto this campus and get out of their car, that they are part of the family, that we care about them and that they are valued regardless of who they are,” he said. “We’re going to give them incredible Lope treatment.”

That’s the kind of treatment Farmer-Thompson was talking about when she referenced the foundational piece for GCU’s diversity efforts. Her final thoughts on the matter delved even deeper:

“When I think about spirituality and the conversations we have had around diversity, for GCU these are inextricably linked. Dating back decades, we have always been mission minded and mission driven, which has resulted in a very diverse campus and team of people working here. Being united and being diverse is who we are.

“Many people miss the obvious: We have lived out our Christian beliefs and values through efforts that have truly transformed the lives of our students, staff, faculty and community. That is the truest and most effective way an organization can demonstrate diversity.” **G**



Tim Jones

Before becoming a coach, Nicole Powell was an All-American basketball and WNBA All-Star, and she recently was inducted into the National Federation of State High School Associations Hall of Fame.

PHOTO BY DAVID KADLUBOWSKI





Nicole Powell's **TALENT** **SHOWS**

BY PAUL CORO

GCU coach swung through a variety of activities before pivoting toward basketball

The ongoing legend of Nicole Powell, which ranges from child prodigy to a national hall of fame, could have been the tale of a tennis phenom.

She was a baby in a court-side carrier with parents checking on her between volleys until she was mobile enough to be their ball girl.

She was a girl whose serves hit the backstop as opponents began their return swings, prompting parents to complain that Powell served too hard.

"She was as good as the Williams sisters," said her mother, Ruth, making a Serena and Venus Williams comparison that is akin to saying her daughter could have outsung Christina Aguilera in the 1990s. "Her serve was probably better than theirs at that time."

Instead, Nicole presides over a different court.

She became the greatest female high school basketball player in Arizona history, an All-American basketball star at Stanford, a WNBA All-Star, an 11-year



**VIDEO ON
NEWS.GCU.EDU**

Powell discusses Year 2
of her GCU program



Nicole Powell was an All-American at Stanford and won a championship in the WNBA, but then there's the equally memorable photo from years earlier: She met Dan Majerle long before she got to coach alongside him at GCU.

PHOTOS COURTESY NICOLE POWELL

playing pro and, finally, a coach who made a hometown return last year as the women's basketball head coach at Grand Canyon University.

Her excellence could have been in tennis. Or track. Or dance. Or saxophone. Or academia.

Nicole constantly was exposed to opportunities and incentives as the only child of an untiring mother who worked 30 years in Phoenix Parks and Recreation and a motivating father, Lawrence, who worked 34 years in Maricopa County Juvenile Probation.

But she kept gravitating to basketball. She had the pull of a hoop her father installed in their south Phoenix driveway for her 10th birthday. There were the tugs of the basketball games she saw, mimicked and joined while her mother worked at Desert West Community Center, just 7 miles southwest of GCU.

"I appreciate that so much more now, being older and having perspective," Nicole said. "Not every kid gets a chance to go do karate, try tennis, play in a basketball league year-round and do art. I'm so lucky that I did."

It turned Nicole into a well-rounded, elite student-athlete who earned a spot in the National Federation of State High School Associations Hall of Fame in July.

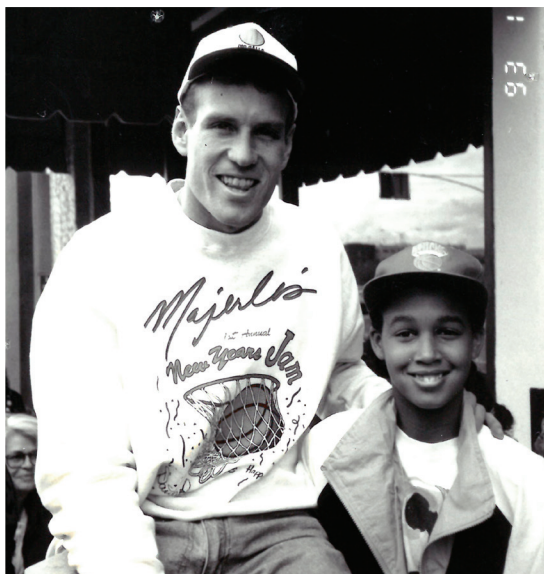
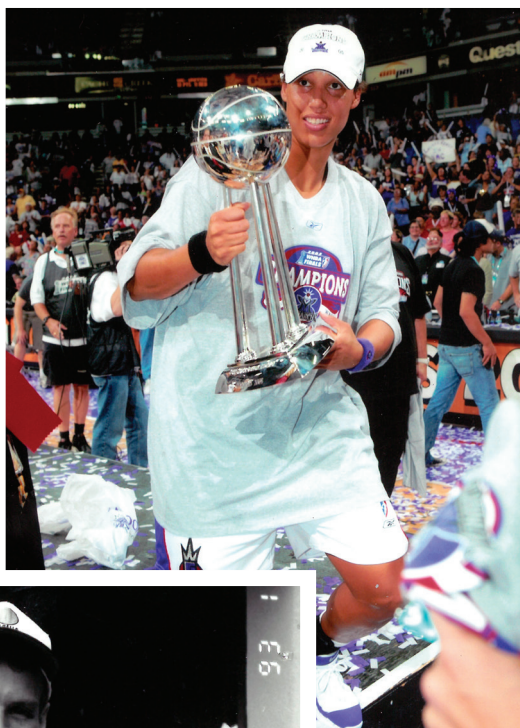
Variety of sports

Standout youth athletes often specialize in one sport, but the Powells never created a master plan for greatness. Nicole was allowed to pursue her curiosities and carry out her zest for success and challenges.

"Our fun family time was to go to the park at night – go walking, go to the track, go play tennis," Nicole said. "We loved to go shoot hoops as a family."

She thrived across the spectrum, but family vacations were tied to tennis tournaments throughout her preteen years. There was a hint that basketball could overtake tennis when Nicole came home upset because she had been denied a tryout for her junior high basketball team ... in fourth grade.

The Powells received permission, and a five-year junior high career was born.



“NOT EVERY KID gets a chance to go do karate, try tennis, play in a basketball league year-round and do art. I’m so lucky that I did.” — Nicole Powell



Nicole played with boys in youth leagues, including a team with future NFL receiver Bobby Wade. She swiftly won tennis matches so that she could get to a basketball tourney on time. In high school, she played on the junior varsity boys basketball team in a summer league.

At home, Powell laid out her basketball trading cards on the living room floor as she watched NBA games, sorting the cards by names, teams, favorites, etc.

Once Lawrence installed the hoop and spray-painted a 3-point line, team names and family initials on the driveway (“atrocious looking,” Ruth said), Nicole rarely came off the court whether she was at school, home or her mother’s workplace.

“Mom, Dad, come see this new move!” Nicole would say as she burst into the house.

They watched approvingly before Lawrence added, “But you can’t do it with your left hand.” Nicole returned to the court until she mastered the move with her off-hand.

Busy schedule

Ruth drove like an Uber chauffeur, picking up Nicole from school in south Phoenix, taking her to the Phoenix Tennis Center in central Phoenix and going to and from her work post in west Phoenix. Because city events ran late, Nicole spent many nights at the Desert West gym, emulating the moves of men playing pickup basketball and squeezing in her shots as their action went end to end.

“I was just having a great time,” Nicole said. “I thought it was normal. I spent so much time there. Gym, big park, playground, community center. It was an integral part of my life. I was so lucky as a kid.”

The Powells never pondered sending Nicole off to a youth tennis academy. Girls club basketball was barely a thing, and women’s basketball college scholarships were an unknown to the Powells until her first letter came.

Instead, Nicole prospered from the cross-training of karate and ballet. She benefited from the hand-eye coordination and lateral footwork of tennis. She learned leadership and teamwork from the diverse perspectives of her basketball, tennis, badminton, cross country and track and field teams while earning straight A’s at Mountain Pointe High School.

Ruth and Lawrence played basketball, but neither played beyond high school in Iowa and Arkansas, respectively. Nicole was basketball-blessed to be 6-foot-2, but the rest came from her eating up rows of opportunities like Ms. Pac-Man gobbling basketballs.

“She’d gone with me when I went shopping for the prizes for the Juneteenth 3-point contest,” Ruth said. “When she saw that Michael Jordan backboard that you put on your bedroom door ... saliva. She practiced and practiced and beat all the men. She was 12.”

That passion and purpose foretold how she became The Arizona Republic Girls Basketball Player of the Century, a two-time finalist for the Naismith Award (NCAA’s player of the year) and a woman who could make 20 consecutive shots on a leasing office mini-hoop to earn a rent discount.

New wave

As a pro who won the 2005 WNBA championship in Sacramento and was a 2009 All-Star, Powell was part of a new wave of taller women’s players with guard abilities.

“I had the skills because I played one-on-one all the time,” Nicole said. “I was at the park playing ‘21’ all the time. You have to dribble through 13 kids, get your shot off and be competitive.”

It was not just a playing career. It was a burgeoning basketball career.

Nicole rarely rested in games. When she did, she went to the end of the bench and put a towel over her head. Lawrence noticed she was tuning out of the game and huddles.

“Wouldn’t it be great to work on a college campus the rest of your adult life?” Lawrence told Nicole. “Working with kids. Wouldn’t that be fun? You love basketball. You’d teach basketball. You’d stay young forever.”

Nicole learned her teammates’ roles better than they did. She became a Gonzaga assistant coach while playing in the WNBA. When Gonzaga played at Stanford, a video tribute to Nicole was shown and a Zags player commented, “You were pretty good, Coach.”

“I’m still playing,” Nicole said.

She is all coach now. She took over GCU as it entered full Division I membership and exceeded expectations with a third-place finish in the Western Athletic Conference last year.

“I look back at my history and I know I’m prepared for this moment,” Nicole said. **G**

INSIDER GCU

These handy tidbits have many applications – including one that's an app



Any new ways for students to know what's happening on campus?

GCU Engage, the new app from Student Engagement, has logins for students, staff and parents and is loaded with information. Its slogan: Keeping Lopes in the Loop. The map provides navigation around campus and the calendar lists Associated Students of Grand Canyon University and Canyon Activities Board activities and events managed by clubs and organizations. Along with personalizing the app to receive alerts from favorite clubs, Bible study groups and intramural teams, students can track their volunteer hours. The app creates a co-curricular transcript, enabling students to show potential employers a record of their community service and leadership experiences.

Insider tip: “Students can create their own set of programming. They can customize their college experience, highlighting the things they want to do, not sorting through 583 events and activities.”
— Jeremy Mack, Director of Student Engagement

When's the first play of the Ethington Theatre season?

A week earlier than past years. Students arrived on campus in mid-July to start putting together “Ring Round the Moon,” which opens Aug. 24 – the Friday of Welcome Week. The rest of this year's lineup is “Macbeth” in October, “Peter and the Starcatcher” in November/December, “Who Will Carry the Word?” in February and “Godspell” in March.

Insider tip: “In addition to our regular Ethington schedule, we have a new theatre group. It's a Christian theatre group that (GCU acting instructor/director) Michael Kary is going to head up for us. They will be performing at schools and churches around the Valley.”

— Claude Pensis, Dean, College of Fine Arts and Production



What's the most unusual new club?

The Medieval Combat Club enables students to participate in “larping” (Live Action Role Play). There are 126 clubs on campus, and the way this one began is typical – a group of like-minded students started getting together on a regular basis and decided to apply for club status, which was granted in 2017.

Insider tip: “I love that club, in particular, because it provides an area of community for students who might not have found it in any other club.”

— Pablo Ciscomani, Clubs and Organizations Coordinator

What can we look forward to at Chapel this fall?

The most notable of the six first-time speakers is Joni Eareckson Tada, who has been a quadriplegic since she was injured in a diving accident at age 17. She has written more than 50 books on disability outreach, the goodness of God and the problem of suffering and will be here Sept. 17. Chapel is at 11:15 a.m. Mondays in GCU Arena, and students also can attend The Gathering at 8 p.m. Tuesdays in Antelope Gym.

Insider tip: “There are lots of amazing events that happen on campus, but Chapel is a consistent once-a-week experience and in a unique way represents the core of what GCU is about.”
— Danielle Rinnier, Director of Spiritual Life

Who are the newcomers to watch on the men's basketball team?

The Lopes have six new scholarship players, two of whom will not play in games until 2019-20 because they are undergraduate transfers (Isiah Brown from Northwestern and Carlos Johnson from Washington). Freshman Tim Finke, the most touted signing, is joined by his brother Michael, an eligible transfer who graduated from Illinois with one year of eligibility remaining. Trey Drechsel is also an eligible senior transfer from Western Washington. J.J. Rhymes, a Phoenix native, might have the largest immediate impact. The Rhymes family is renowned in Phoenix-area high school basketball, and this Rhymes was a junior college All-American at Hutchinson (Kan.) Community College last season. He could start on the wing opposite Oscar Frayer.

Insider tip: “J.J. is ultra-competitive and extremely tough. He can really get to the basket and score. He's a bull down there. As far as getting to the basket and those type of things, I think he's going to be very successful in the way that I will use him in mismatches, a lot like I used Josh (Braun) in the post.”

— Dan Majerle, men's basketball coach

What's new on the food scene?

The big news, especially for budget-conscious students, is the arrival of Taco Bell. The popular eatery is taking over the top floor of Thunder Alley, and plans are to have it open by the end of September. But that isn't the only new place. Pita Jungle is taking over the space previously occupied by the Lope Shop on Lopes Way, and Diamondback Apartments on the burgeoning east side of campus will feature Chick-fil-A, GCBC and Fresh Fusion.

INSIDER tip: "You can eat at Taco Bell seven straight days and not get tired of it ... or, if you're like me, seven times a day."

— Stephen Steininger, Executive Vice President, Associated Students of GCU



So where did the Lope Shop go?

It moved to the old Fleming Building, just south of Prescott Field, and is going big – it will have 9,500 square feet, five times its previous space, will feature huge new glass display windows, and will tempt shoppers with everything from a Nike concept store to a boutique, a women's fashion department and a technology area.

INSIDER tip: "Late at night, if girls run out of mascara, they won't have to run off campus to the store."

— Shelly Schrimpf, Assistant Director of Campus Retail and Licensing



What else is making the east side burgeon?

Five new structures are opening there this fall. The crown jewel is the Colangelo College of Business Building – the first two floors will be ready in August, the other two later in the semester. There's also the new Canyon Activities Center, which will feature 10 multipurpose courts for students, a new parking garage right next to it on Missouri Avenue, and two new apartment buildings, Cactus and Jerome.

INSIDER tip: "The new CCOB Building will feature many collaborative work spaces for the community of learners – both students and faculty. The first floor has a spacious lobby where students can hang out, and faculty will be on that floor as well to make them accessible."

— Randy Gibb, Dean, Colangelo College of Business

Whew, that's a lot! Any changes in the middle of campus?

The College of Nursing and Health Care Professions and the College of Theology switched places over the summer, which gave CONHCP two new labs in what is now the Natural Sciences Building.

Theology is looking forward to having a ministry lab in its new digs, and the College of Fine Arts and Production will be able to spread out a little now that it's in the old CCOB building.

INSIDER tip: "We'll have two identical hospital suite simulation labs. The idea is that they are simulating nursing skills in a safe environment that is learning-focused."

—Dr. Lisa Smith, Dean, College of Nursing and Health Care Professions

There couldn't be any other big construction projects on the horizon, could there?

Silly question. One of the oldest structures on campus, Building 18 (opened in 1984), is scheduled to be demolished during Christmas break and will be replaced by a four-story building that will house Admissions and Student Advisement, a new Antelope Reception Center and student lounges, among other things. There also will be three more apartment buildings going up next to Cactus and Jerome plus a parking garage at 31st Avenue and Camelback Road.

INSIDER tip: "We are really excited to be in the planning stages for the new Antelope Reception Center. The new ARC will create a more congruent flow for students and their families and will provide more space and privacy for students when meeting with Admissions. We are hoping to have an indoor/outdoor feel to showcase the beautiful Arizona weather, especially in the winter months when we have a lot of out-of-state visitors."

—Shannon Landers, Director of Campus Visitation and the ARC





His faith is still going strong

Physically challenged student dreams of becoming a pastor for the disabled

BY RYAN KRYSKA

Don't try to walk a day in Raymond Carawan's shoes. He doesn't want you to.

God has challenged this Grand Canyon University online student with a variety of disabilities, but Carawan embraces his ailments. He says they're his fight and his alone.

"I wouldn't have the strength I do if anything were different," he said. "It frustrates me when people want to pray to my face for healing because I've told people over and over we live in too much of an ablest society. It is not always God's will for you to

be physically healed. Paul and Timothy had their ailments, yet they healed people.

"In our weaknesses, His glory is revealed."

Carawan, 28, is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Christian Studies. He one day hopes to be a pastor for people with disabilities.

He has undergone at least one surgery a year since age 20. Most years, he has been put through multiple procedures, including two on his brain and surgeries on his back, neck, shoulder and, most recently, hip. He has Asperger's syndrome, a growth hormone defect called acromegaly (commonly known

as gigantism), neurofibroma tumors, a skin condition, growth defects and emotional scars from abuse. He also has battled cancer and has not been officially cleared.

But none of that defines Carawan, who says he has read the Bible cover to cover more times than he can count. His learning at GCU simply has taken his passion for Christ to another level.

"It definitely gives me an additional reason to wake up in the morning," Carawan said of attending GCU. "On one hand, I always knew He would place me here, but

on the other, the years and years of surgeries and not being able to get into school started to lead to a conflation where you kind of had doubts but kind of had faith at the same time. The way I look at it is even though I still have a lot of hurdles to overcome, it's an extreme divine miracle."

Beth Jamison, GCU's Director of Student Disability Services, said accommodations are made for both ground and online students with disabilities. But she says the online program has been the most used medium.

"One of the biggest attributes that GCU has is we've worked very, very hard for many years to make the online program accessible," Jamison said. "Online becomes a great tool for people with disabilities. Sometimes they just need a little flexibility. One day I might be feeling really great and the next I might not be doing great."

In 2014, the University adopted accessibility standards to make online learning work for anyone who needed assistance. All videos began to use closed-captioning and read-aloud functions, and supplemental items such as interactive e-books are available to all students.

"A lot of those things are offered even without disability services," Jamison said. "Flexibility is key."

Ray's path

As a kid, Carawan was removed from the abuse of his biological family, only to be shuffled through foster care and then finally placed with a family that treated him no better than the last family. But somewhere along the way, he met at least one family that introduced him to the Lord.

"I remember the first place that I really saw any love in the world. And they introduced me to Christ," he said. "Granted, I was too young to understand my own sin and why I needed to be saved from my own sin, but I saw enough to learn the world was wicked and full of challenges. And I saw with the Lord the exact opposite of that.

"Nobody raised me but God's word."

At 18, Carawan left home, boarded a Greyhound bus and ended up working for a carnival. He set up rides and said he prayed to the Lord that his beaten shoulders and back wouldn't give out.

Sometimes they did. But what never gave way was his faith.

"I didn't have a whole lot of work experiences," Carawan said. "It is what it is, and these trials and tribulations definitely have been a constant grind."

Carawan now lives by himself in a small town in Wisconsin. He doesn't walk as well as he used to, so he uses a wheelchair to get around. He spends his time studying for his GCU coursework but also has a passion for writing, which emerged as a way to share what was on his mind.

In seventh grade, a special form of writing crossed his path – poetry.

"Something will just hit me and I'll just sit down and write a poem within a matter of minutes," he said. "I started using that as a way to relate to some friends of mine, to put myself in position to use my voice in a way that I couldn't at that time."


Carawan took his poetry a step further with the help of one of his closest friends, who told him he needed to step outside his comfort zone and offered him \$50 if he shared his work with three people. Six years later, his Facebook group has more than 800 members.

"Initially, I had told myself I'd be happy if it reached 50 people and impacted their lives," Carawan said. "One of my biggest hopes is to actually get some of my work published. I just don't have the finances to self-publish – it's just something that's a little foreign to me."

Carawan wants to pursue an education beyond a bachelor's degree and said he would like to spend some of his future studies on campus so he can get involved in student groups.

But overall, he just wants to help people. He views disability ministry as something that's needed to keep others motivated.

"The reality is there are so many of us not only fighting for our lives but fighting for the greatest sense of normality we can find. Society needs to help make it less of a grind to benefit everybody," he said.

"Just the fact that I'm in school and God has created this (GCU) family for me ... I know there's a lot more that the Lord has in store for me, but this is the thing I've wanted all my life and now I have it. It's very intriguing to see what is next." 



Raymond Carawan's niece and nephew might be a little bashful, but he's not shy about facing his multiple surgeries and disabilities.

It is not always God's will for you to be physically healed. . . . In our weaknesses, His glory is revealed."



Among the former Lopes in the Phoenix Fire Department are (standing, from left) Harlyn Griffiths, Joey Bristyan, Ryan Holtorf, Mike Quill and Joey Reiman and (sitting, from left) Troy Holtorf, Trent Otis, Brian Imboden and Austin Moreland.

PHOTO BY DAVID KADLUBOWSKI

Clubhouse to firehouse

Former GCU players use lessons learned in baseball to blaze a trail

BY THERESA SMITH

Fire engines and uniform-clad Phoenix firefighters are a common sight beyond the right-field wall during games at GCU Ballpark. Other firefighters who are off duty observe from the stadium while their children hit on the mini turf field, pitch on the concourse and chase foul balls on the berm.

But these are more than avid GCU baseball fans. They are former GCU baseball players.

More than a dozen are firefighters in the Valley, and they say the lessons learned as student-athletes have transferred exceptionally well to their service-oriented and challenging

career. They are drawn to the plethora of similarities between baseball and firefighting: Both require long waits followed by intense stress and physical movement, and both require teammates/co-workers to live and work in close proximity while collaborating and accepting their roles.

From captains Brian Imboden, Jeremy Neville and Austin Moreland to newcomer Harlyn Griffiths, “the culture of the fire department is that you have to be able to make good decisions, to be accountable and to work well with others,” Moreland said. “It is all about your ability to make your team better. I think

that’s why athletes transition into firefighting very well.”

Joey Reiman, a GCU catcher in 2002-03, played four years in the Toronto Blue Jays organization, finished his physical education degree while serving on the Lopes coaching staff, and then made a smooth transition into firefighting, joining his father on Big Red.

It was a move Griffiths made in 2016 following an unfulfilled post-graduate stint in technical support.

“After spending time out of baseball, I missed being in the clubhouse,” Griffiths said. “I have that now with the fellas and gals in the fire

service, that camaraderie and having something that is definitely bigger than yourself.”

At the suggestion of a fellow travel ball coach who was a firefighter, Griffiths went on a ride-along and found his purpose. The next day he registered for EMT (emergency medical technician) training, then gained his certification, enrolled in the Phoenix Firefighter Recruit Training Academy, passed all his exams and was hired.

“For me, it is like being on a baseball team,” Griffiths said. “Everything we do in a fire department is together, whether it is cooking, cleaning or working out. Everyone is helping.”

Unlike other sports, in which athletes retreat to the locker room after competition, every baseball player has a post-game job: raking the field, tamping the mound, sweeping out dugouts and laying tarps.

“It took the selfishness out of the team -- you just did the work that had to be done,” Moreland said. “It is the same at a fire station. Everybody pitches in to get the work done.”

Similarities abound

Five players from Moreland’s era, 2002-04, became firefighters thanks to the influence of Neville, who juggled firefighting and a GCU assistant coach schedule.

The adaptation to co-workers for 24-hour shifts, including trying to sleep in close quarters, was eased by the experiences of traveling with the same teammates on long road trips, from bus to hotel to three-hour pregame sessions. Moreover, the mental challenges are similar.

“It is like dealing with a bad at-bat or booting a groundball. You move onto the next play,” Reiman said.

“Stank (GCU baseball coach Andy Stankiewicz) said to us, ‘You can’t play this game like a middle linebacker, out of control and really fast,’” Griffiths said. “When I say fast, I mean mentally fast. To me, when we are going on a call, it is about slowing down my emotions and my thoughts so I can effectively do my job, whether it is taking a set of vitals or setting up a back board, or pulling lines (hoses).”

Joey Bristyan never forgot his first at-bat as a Lope in 2009 because the bat flew out of his hands and landed down the first-base line.

“To get over my nerves as a college freshman, I talked to older players,” he said. “As a rookie firefighter, I did the same thing. I picked the brains of the veteran firefighters.”

Sampling of GCU baseball players who became firefighters

NAME	FIRE DEPARTMENT	YEARS IN GCU BASEBALL
Joey Bristyan	Phoenix	2009-12
Ryan Freeburg	Scottsdale	1990-92
Harlyn Griffiths	Phoenix	2012-13
Ryan Holtorf	Phoenix	1995-97
Troy Holtorf	Phoenix	2002-03
Brian Imboden	Phoenix	1989-91
Tait Mitton	Sun City	1988-91
Austin Moreland	Phoenix	2002-04
Jeremy Neville	Phoenix	1992-93
Trent Otis	Phoenix	2001-02
Mike Quill	Phoenix	2001-04
Joey Reiman	Phoenix	2002-03



The old Grand Canyon logo adorns the helmets of Trent Otis and other firefighters.

PHOTO BY DAVID KADLUBOWSKI



Phoenix Fire Department captains Brian Imboden and Austin Moreland have discovered many correlations between being on a baseball team and working in a firehouse.

Imboden, one of those veterans, has experienced numerous medical emergencies during his 25-year firefighting career, which includes 13 years as a captain.

"If something is going wrong, a drowning or a code (cardiopulmonary arrest), you have to manage your emotions and do your job," said Imboden, who earned a degree in public administration with a minor in psychology in 1991.

The Cortez High School graduate followed his dad into firefighting, cementing a lifelong commitment to west Phoenix in general and GCU in particular. After all, his station is less than two miles from campus.

Similarly, his fellow Lopes baseball alums-turned-firefighters have maintained a close connection with GCU. Firefighters have been welcomed on campus for years to participate in physical training, including lifting weights, swimming and playing basketball. When Moreland's future wife, Krista Jacob, was a volleyball player at GCU, the players posed on a fire truck for their team photo.

"I feel like the fire department has always been a part of Grand Canyon," said Moreland.

It has come full circle: Occasionally,

Stankiewicz suggests fire service for specific players, and Neville and Imboden, who remain involved in baseball through coaching Warriors Baseball Academy, periodically recommend players to Stankiewicz for recruitment.

Staying close to home

Like the laces of a tightly wound baseball, the ties among the alums, the west Phoenix community and the University are binding.

"I knew Grand Canyon was a Christian school, but I was going there to live at home and try to walk on the baseball team," Troy Holtorf said. "Little did I know that I would go there and end up receiving the Gospel."

The professors at GCU, particularly the late Malcolm "Mack" Sloan and College of Science, Engineering and Technology professor William Kuehl, made a profound spiritual impact on Holtorf, while Neville and Holtorf's cousin Ryan Holtorf, another baseball player-turned-firefighter, cultivated his interest in fire service.

"I prayed a lot about becoming a firefighter," Holtorf said. "I didn't know if I could handle the blood and guts, I didn't know if I could handle the physicality and I

still get nervous going to work."

Indeed, those who answer the call to serve the community through firefighting are a special breed.

"Working for the fire department is physically, physically, physically demanding, so it helps that we are all in great shape and we all know how to work out and adjust to the heat," Moreland said. "But, really, it is mentally taxing more than anything else, so going to Grand Canyon and being a student-athlete prepared us for mental pressure."

"You really don't know what you're going to get on a game day. It's the same thing for the fire department. You don't know what you're going to see. Sometimes we see tragic, sad things. We see sick, injured people and we deal with pretty extreme emergencies."

Communities, particularly west Phoenix and the GCU campus, rely on physically fit and mentally tough men and women to answer their calls for help, and often the firefighters coming to the rescue are former Lopes baseball players.

As Stankiewicz concluded, "We are very proud of the alums who are giving back." **G**

CLASS NOTES

What's
new with
you?



Send your class notes and a high-resolution photo to www.gcu.edu/classnotes.

1990s



Dr. Steve Bebee, B.S. in Physical Education, '92, and Ed.D. in Organizational

Leadership with an Emphasis in Effective Schools, '15, was chosen to be the new superintendent of the Casa Grande (Ariz.) Union High School District. Bebee was previously the principal at Cactus Shadows High School in Cave Creek, Ariz., and has been in the education field for 23 years.



Charles Ratliff, B.A. in English Writing, '94, is a middle school English language arts

teacher in Knox, Ind. His second book (with co-author Leslie May), "Bass Lake Bunch 2: The Secret of the Lost Lake Cottage," was published in March. It is a sequel to his first novel, "Bass Lake Bunch: The Hideout at the Abandoned Fish Hatchery."

2000s



Chris Connealy, M.S. in Executive Fire Service

Leadership, '02, has been appointed Senior Director of Emergency Services in Williamson County, Texas. Connealy has more than 40 years of experience in emergency services and previously served as the Texas State Fire Marshal.



Dr. Deb Waterbury, M.A. in Teaching, '04, is the founder of Love Everlasting Ministries, a

nonprofit organization that formed the "Reap What You Sew" school, which offers tailoring and business training to widows and destitute women in Malawi. She resides in Tucson, Ariz., and hosts a live, daily radio talk show called "Doing Life with Dr. Deb." She also has authored nine books, including her latest, "The Lies that Bind: And the Truth that Sets You Free."



Dawna Cato, B.S. in Nursing, '06, and M.S. in Nursing with an Emphasis in Nursing Education,

'09, is a consultant for the Arizona Heart Foundation. She developed the first Cardiovascular

Nurse Specialty (CVNS) Program supported by the Arizona Heart Foundation and Arizona College. The program launched in January and became the largest continuing education activity ever awarded by the Western Multi-State Division, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. Cato also serves as a leader in several roles and organizations at the state, national and international levels.

2010s



Daniel M. Curia, M.S. in Leadership with an Emphasis in Disaster Preparedness and

Executive Fire Leadership, '10, was appointed Fire Chief of the Charleston Fire Department (S.C.). Curia has 28 years of experience. He began working at the Durham (N.C.) Fire Department in 1990 and became Fire Chief in February 2013.



Jacki Gerchman, MBA with an Emphasis in Leadership, '10, is

the new Executive Director at United Way of Broome County (N.Y.), a non-government organization that helps fund health and human services in Broome County.



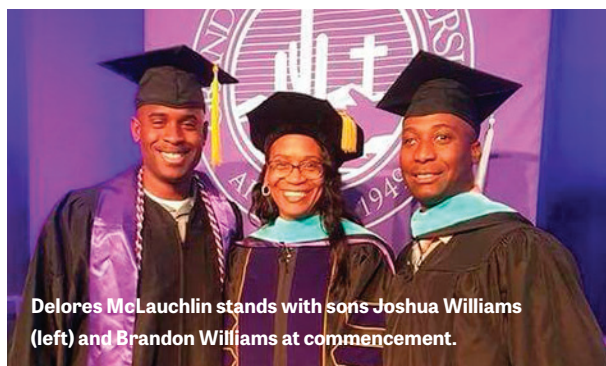
Bill Stiteler, M.Ed. in Education Administration, '11, was hired as Chief Executive

Administrator of Mountain Institute JTED's in Prescott, Ariz. Using his experience in construction and career and technical education (CTE), Stiteler is passionate about sharing his love of building things and showing high school students the value of CTE and its ability to lead to legitimate career pursuits.



Rhonda Gehle, M.A. in Christian Studies with an Emphasis in Christian Leadership, '11, and

M.S. in Psychology with an Emphasis in Life Coaching, '17, had her book, "Purposeful Living: A Young Adult's Guide to Discovery," published in June. Gehle works at GCU as a Lopes specialist



Delores McLauchlin stands with sons Joshua Williams (left) and Brandon Williams at commencement.

SPOTLIGHT

Delores McLauchlin, '18
Brandon Williams, '18
Joshua Williams, '18

Mom led the way, and her sons marched in step

Two thousand miles separate Delores McLauchlin from her sons, Brandon and Joshua Williams. But for the past few years, Grand Canyon University's online program has made them feel much closer.

The mother from North Carolina and her sons out west graduated days apart from each other in April.

McLauchlin was awarded a Doctor of Education degree in Organizational Leadership. Brandon Williams, 38, who lives in Las Vegas, earned a master's degree in Educational Leadership and Joshua Williams, 30, earned a bachelor's degree in Justice Studies.

"It was one of those rare events," said Joshua, who has been working as an Army recruiter in Gilbert, Ariz. "I know this journey is not over yet. But to have my brother and mother alongside me, not too many people can say they've done that."

The brothers are both on active duty in the Army. They grew up in North Carolina, and their father also served in the military.

Brandon, the oldest of four siblings, became the first college graduate in his immediate family in 2002, when he earned his bachelor's degree. But ever since then, McLauchlin has been the one to carry the family's educational pursuit. She was the first of the three to enroll at GCU.

"She is the one who brought us all together. She is always on us about finishing up school, getting back into school," said Brandon, who plans to return to GCU to receive the same degree as his mother. "Money was always an issue coming up. My mom was hungry. She just kept going."

McLauchlin said her enrollment advisor, Chad Kent, has become like part of the family, and her experience at GCU compelled her to get her sons involved in the program. "I am grateful that they listened," she said.

—RYAN KRYSKA

manager in Student Operations and has worked in education for almost 30 years, both in the K-12 setting and at the university level.



Gustavo Anton, B.S. in Biology with an Emphasis in Pre-Medicine, '12,

was selected to start a neurosurgical residency program at St. John Providence in Warren, Mich. After graduating from GCU, Anton completed his M.S. in Biomedical Science with honors from Midwestern University in Glendale, Ariz.



A. Margot Brisky, B.S. in Psychology, '13, and M.A. in Christian Studies with an Emphasis in

Youth Ministry, '15, is a lifestyle trainer, empowerment speaker, international author, adoption advocate and doctoral candidate, working to bridge gaps between generations of women. Brisky hosts a weekly program, DiscoverHer Journey, and an annual empowerment conference, Woman In Action Conference, with attendees traveling from five countries.



Shadrach Relf, B.S. in Justice Studies, '13, and MPA with an Emphasis in

Government and Policy, '17, was hired as Chief of Staff for Walt Blackman's campaign in District 6 of Arizona. Relf is also a United States Army veteran, retired after nine years.



A.J. Harris, B.A. in Christian Studies, '14, is a former teacher and pastor and is a semester

away from receiving his M.Div. in Pastoral Studies at Liberty

University Theological Seminary Online. Harris works as a substitute teacher while also writing and producing warmup songs for several high school sports teams and teaching at Inside Out Studio, a music and art studio in Farmington, Ark.



LaGidgette Robinson, M.S. in Nursing with an Emphasis in Nursing Education, '16,

is a registered nurse at Baylor Scott and White in Temple, Texas. Robinson has been a registered nurse since 2004 and is studying to become a nurse practitioner.



Tom Gwyer, M.S. in Leadership with an Emphasis in Disaster

Preparedness and Executive Fire Leadership, '16, is a 25-year veteran of the Myrtle Beach (S.C.) Fire Department and has been promoted to Fire Chief. Gwyer also serves as a member of the state's regional Type-3 FEMA Incident Management Team and the International Association of Fire Chiefs.



Kezia Arterberry, B.S. in Psychology, '16, is a published author, inspirational spoken word poet,

and behavior health technician. Arterberry launched a paperback version of her book, "Empower You! Mindset Transformation: A Daily Devotional for the Mind," in June. She also held a book signing in Scottsdale, Ariz., to allow attendees to network and listen to her speak on subjects pertaining to empowerment.



Edith Sarmiento, M.A. in Reading with an Emphasis in Elementary Education, '16, is a

third-grade teacher at A.J. Mitchell Elementary School in the Nogales (Ariz.) Unified School District. Last year at her school, her students scored the highest on the AzMERIT test in English language arts and tied for the highest in math. Sarmiento received recognition for her work at the NUSD governing board meeting in April.



Keira Jones, B.S. in Psychology, '16, is a full-time blogger in Phoenix. Her blog, "Style Me Fair,"

focuses on educating readers about fair, conscious and sustainable fashion.



Christopher Gates, B.S. in Educational Studies, '16, and MPA with an Emphasis in

Government and Policy, '17, published his second book, "Unwind. Up, Up, and Away!", in April. Gates has more than a decade of experience in K-12 education and is a certified social and emotional intelligence coach in Miami Gardens, Fla.



Mack Olsen, B.S. in Marketing, '16, is the product director for Portland Gear, a Portland, Ore.,

company selling T-shirts, accessories and hats for men and women. In February, Olsen collaborated with another GCU graduate, Brady Harrison, to launch Hiney Underwear, a men's underwear subscription service.



Brady Harrison, B.S. in Business Management, '17, is the co-owner with Mack Olsen of Hiney

Underwear, a men's underwear subscription service. Hiney is his third company, including Frigid Aspect, an Alaskan winter apparel company he founded right after high school.



Reagan Wright, B.S. in Business Management, '17, is the Public Relations and Marketing

Director at Bloguettes, a creative strategy and design studio in Phoenix. Wright also offers freelancing services and runs her own lifestyle blog, "On the Reag."



Tammy McGarity, DNP, '17, is the director for the Center for Clinical Excellence at a

Magnet hospital in San Antonio, Texas. She is responsible for a team of nurse educators and for programs such as orientation, residency and frontline leadership development.



Molly Turner, B.S. in Counseling with an Emphasis in Addiction, Chemical

Dependency and Substance Abuse, '18, a former GCU beach volleyball player, turned pro this summer and qualified for the main draw of tournaments in Seattle and San Francisco. Turner and her partner won three qualifying matches and earned \$1,000 each for reaching the round of 16 in each tournament.

GCU NEWS



Dr. Meredith Critchfield (left) and Emily Pottinger.

PHOTO BY DAVID KADLUBOWSKI

'Top of Class' gets high marks

The "Top of the Class" podcast from the College of Education, founded by Emily Pottinger and Dr. Meredith Critchfield, can be accessed through iTunes and listened to on numerous devices, including smart phones, while exercising or commuting.

"I think it is going very well," Pottinger said. "We are getting very positive feedback. Listeners are saying that it is informative and it is uplifting the field of education. Especially in light of some challenges in the field, it is a breath of fresh air."

"We have a close-knit group of faculty, so we know from our faculty on campus and our online faculty, we know from those listeners that they are having continued conversations on these relevant topics."

—THERESA SMITH

STEM webinars branch out

Dynamic STEM duo Corinne Araza, Director of K12 STEM Outreach, and Marni Landry, K12 STEM Outreach Manager, got their feet wet in the webinar world over the summer by helping two "STEM Ready" podcasts for the Virginia-based National Catholic Education Association's website. The mission: to help Catholic school educators with their science, technology, engineering and math efforts.

Those two webinars were steppingstones for the pair – and for Strategic Educational Alliances, which will produce GCU's own platform of teacher-development webinars in the 2018-19 academic year to further scale professional development in critical need areas, such as STEM, inquiry and strategic planning for K-12 audiences.

"We will move forward in different professional-development topics, but, by and large, to start out, it'll be STEM-ready topics because that is the area that will best support the development of STEM-ready students for GCU," Araza said.

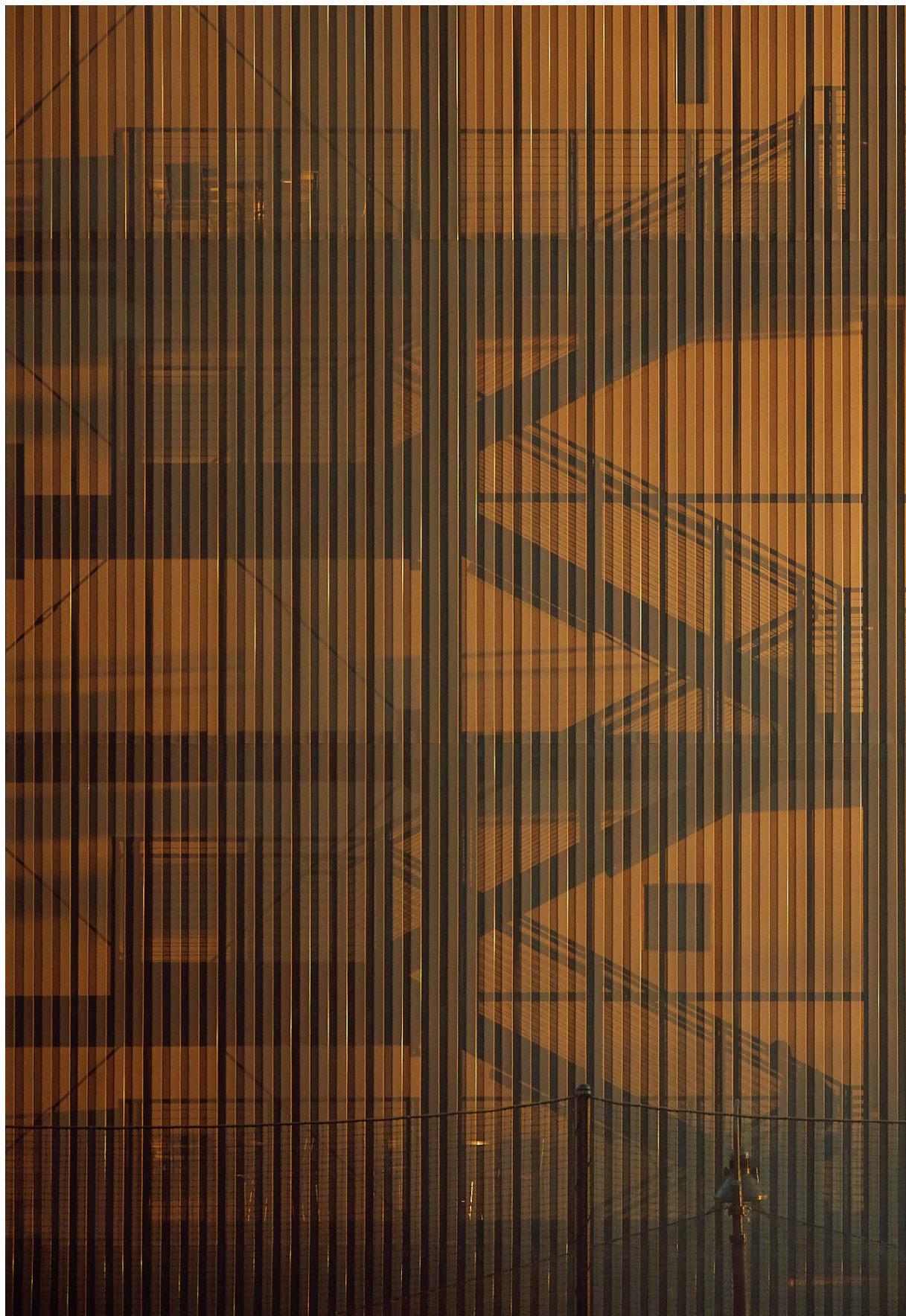
SEA will launch its first webinar in October. Araza said the topic will be STEM and Christian worldview.

—LANA SWEETEN-SHULTS

They call it mellow yellow

GCU Magazine readers are in for a treat as they get acquainted with the work of our new photographer, David Kadlubowski. Here's an example of his unique viewpoint: With the Engineering Building taking on a cool hue at sunset, two students talk on the second floor. Cue the mood music.

PHOTO BY DAVID KADLUBOWSKI



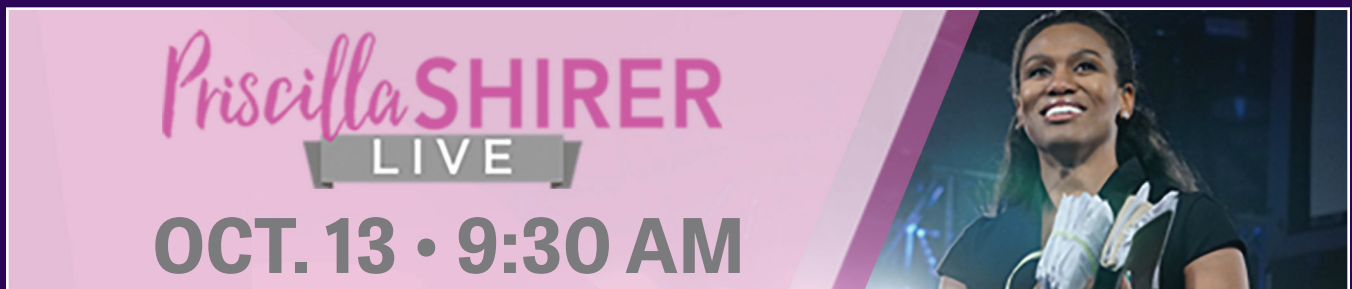




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